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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/994,664	11/28/2001	Willis Blankenship	7517.100	8429

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Thomas P. Liniak, Esq.
Liniak, Berenato, Longacre & White
Suite 240
6550 Rock Spring Drive
Bethesda, MD 20817

EXAMINER

JACKSON, ANDRE L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3677

DATE MAILED: 11/06/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/994,664

Applicant(s)

BLANKENSHIP, WILLIS

Examiner

Andre' L. Jackson

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 November 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 28 November 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 13, 14 and 16-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by USPN 5,842,444 to Perrulli. Perrulli discloses a strap assembly comprising an article-engaging strap (12) including a releasable coupling device (24) for selectively configuring the strap between a closed loop configuration for engaging the strap around an article (11) and an open loop configuration for disengaging the strap from the article; and an article-holding strap (14) including a first end provided with a first releasable fastener (16b) attached to the first end and a second end provided with a second releasable fastener (13b) attached to the second end, wherein the first releasable fastener is releasably attached to the article-engaging strap and wherein the second releasable fastener is provided for releasably attaching the article-holding strap to a supporting structure (15).

Referring to claims 5, 7, 13, 14 and 16-18, Perrulli discloses that the strap assembly (engaging strap and holding strap) is connected together by a slidable loop ring (26) formed in any suitable shape including a D-shape. The ends of the holding strap are hook snap fasteners (16, 13) with D-shape ring portions (16a, 13a) and both the engaging strap and holding strap includes adjustment members (22, 34) respectively for adjusting the straps to a desired configuration. See column 3, lines 55-59.

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2, 3, 6, 8, 11, 12 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Perrulli. Perrulli discloses a strap assembly in the preferred embodiment as a dog leash. Perrulli does not disclose a strap assembly attached to a golf bag and bar of a golf cart as claimed. However, because Perrulli's dog leash includes similar, if not the same operational components as applicant's invention, it is obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art that the second end of the holding strap (14) can be secured to a structure in more than one way or position. For example, the holding strap's second end could be wrapped around a bar of a golf cart and secured to the ring portion of the first releasable fastener of the holding strap or secured to the loop ring of the engaging strap. Furthermore, applicant has not stated that the use of his strap assembly with a golf bag and golf cart solves any relevant problem or is for a particular purpose and the strap assembly of Perrulli operates equally as well.

Claims 9, 10 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Perrulli. Perrulli discloses a single slidable ring member supported by the engaging strap but fails to disclose a plurality of ring members as claimed. However, in Fig. 2, Perrulli illustrates different positions in which the ring member can move relative to the engaging strap, which are shown in phantom.

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Although the figure is intended to depict movement of the one ring member, it is made obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art that additional ring members could be supported by the engaging strap and attached to additional holding straps to provide a leash assembly for multiple dogs or pets.

Claims 19-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Perrulli in view of USPN 1,490,066 to Carr. Perrulli does not disclose a plurality of snap hook eyelets releasably supported by the engaging strap. Carr teaches a sling device including an engaging strap (1) with a plurality of snap hook eyelets (10, 11) disposed on the strap in opposite positions to releasably secure an object to the device to conveniently keep the hands of a wearer of the device free. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the strap assembly of Perrulli to include the eyelets as taught by Carr to provide a strap assembly with snap hooks supports for engaging an object to conveniently keep the hands of a user free.

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Conclusion

Additional references are cited on the PTO 892 form but were not used to determine patentability of this application instead the references gave background information on various strap fasteners.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Andre' L. Jackson whose telephone number is (703) 605-4276. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. - Fri. (9 am - 5 pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, J. J. Swann can be reached on (703) 306-4115. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9326 for regular communications and (703) 872-9327 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1018.

André L. Jackson
Patent Examiner
AU 3677

ALJ
October 21, 2002


J. J. SWANN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600